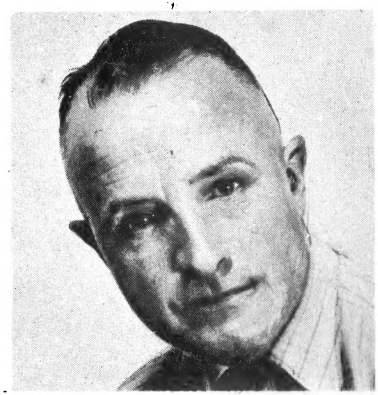
"WHAT A WAR!"

1/3

BY GILBERT WILKINSON

2ND SERIES



THAT is the signature. It does not appear in the cartoons—one joke at a time! A Liverpool man, who has lived down South most of his life. Served with the "P.B.I." in the last "war to end wars." Married; two children, one of each. Completely domesticated; purrs and growls. Slightly enigmatic or wistful expression, but with manifest desire to laugh at, with, or against. Loves de-bunking. Much prefers even an English summer to a "white Christmas"! Neither "T.T." nor "D.T."—just "nice to come home to."

Contributes to many English and American magazines. Now trying the impossible—to be funny six mornings a week in the "DAILY HERALD."

You, the jury, will now retire.

"WHAT A WAR!"

BY

GILBERT WILKINSON

(2ND SERIES)

Second impression.

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The entire profits from the sale of this impression will be devoted to The Central Link Boys' Club, 188a, Blythe Road, London, W.14.

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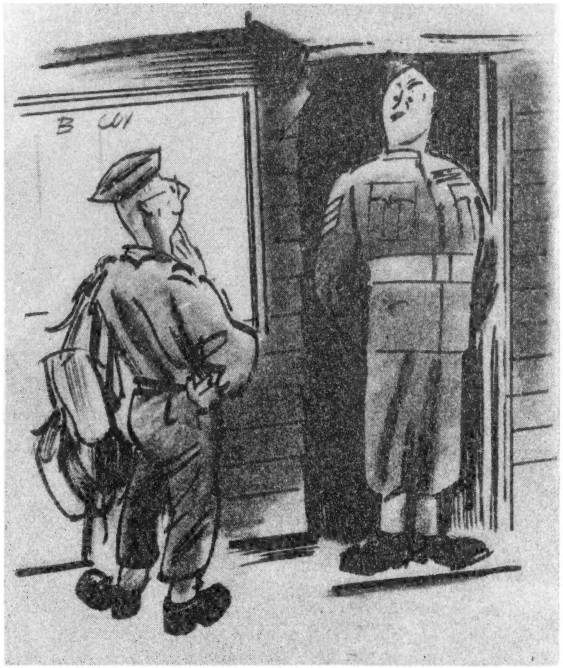
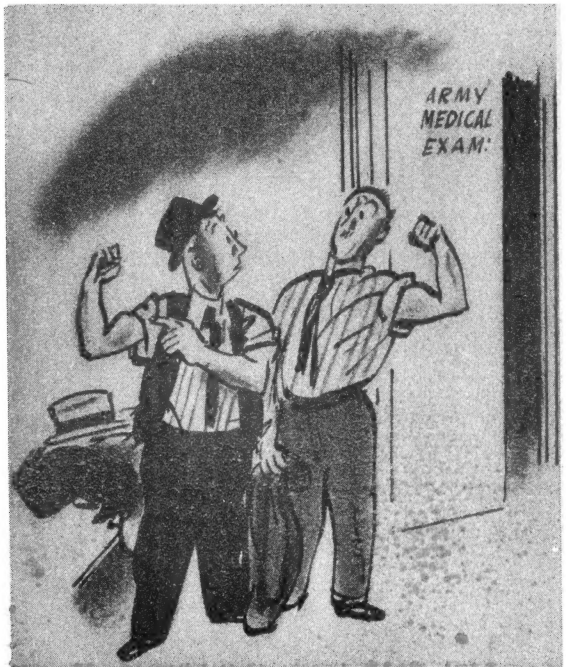
"ALL OVER THE PLACE!"

" Hi, you ! I said ' Cookhouse ' not ' Love's Old Sweet Song,' and where's your cap ? "



" Pardon me, Sarge, has the holiday list gone round yet ? "

" D'you mind if I look out of the window, sir, while we're waiting for the Medical Board ? "



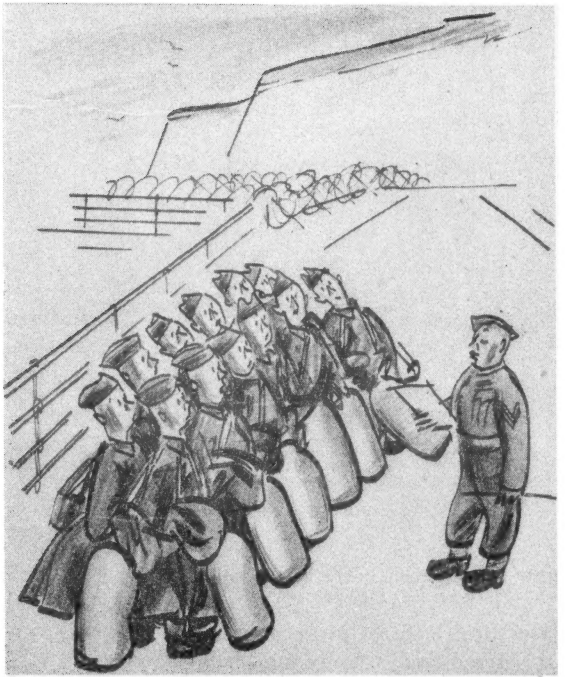
" So what ! I'm not a kid, either, old man, and how's that for muscle ? "

" Blimey ! if I'M pigeon-chested, what do you know about THAT *! "*

" O.K., Private Pegasus, that's high enough— I'M the instructor around here."

" My nipper wants to join the army. ' Plenty of time,' I says, ' you're only a kid yet ! ' "

" You will then proceed to the Hall of Laughter for inoculation and vaccination."

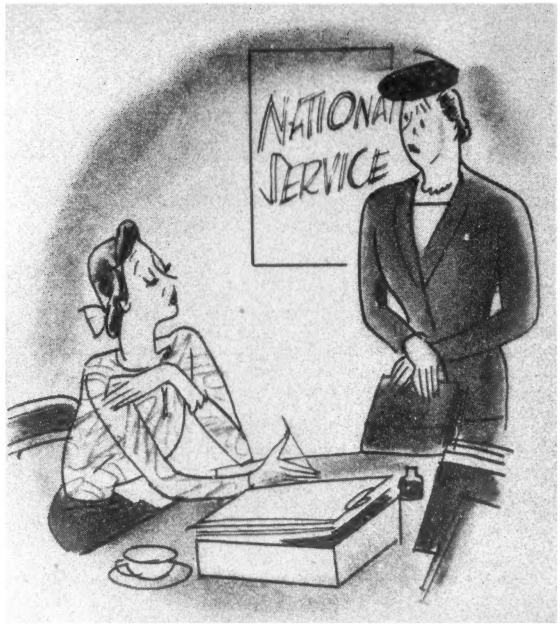


" They were meant to come as a surprise for you Sarge ! "

" Anyway, I bet I'm right. It's the uniform we salute ! "

" Very sorry you've got a sore throat, Sarge ! "

"FOR BEVIN'S SAKE!"



" So, actually, all you're doing at the moment is the housework, arranging and cooking meals for your husband, children and evacuees, canteen work and voluntary fire watching? "

"Oh no! I'VE come to interview YOU!*"*

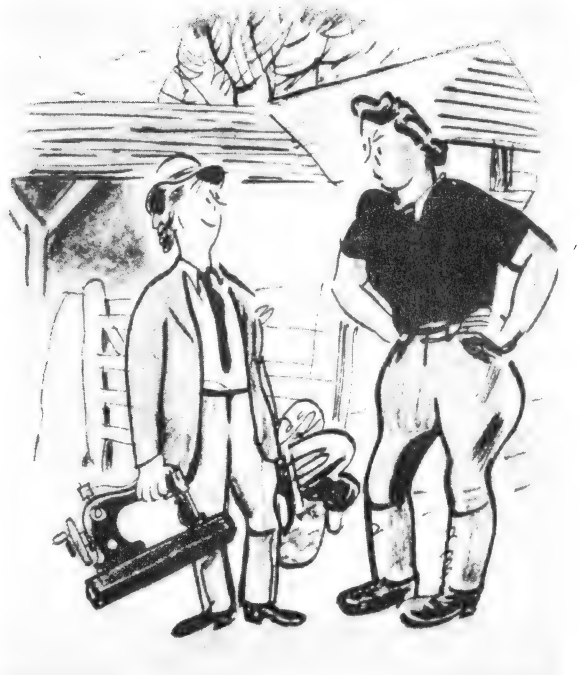
"Remember Trixie Deauville? Well, she and Cynthia Parquet work in the boiler room next to the machine shop I'm in."

B

" I'm going for my 'medical' to-morrow, Babs—any need to dress up? "

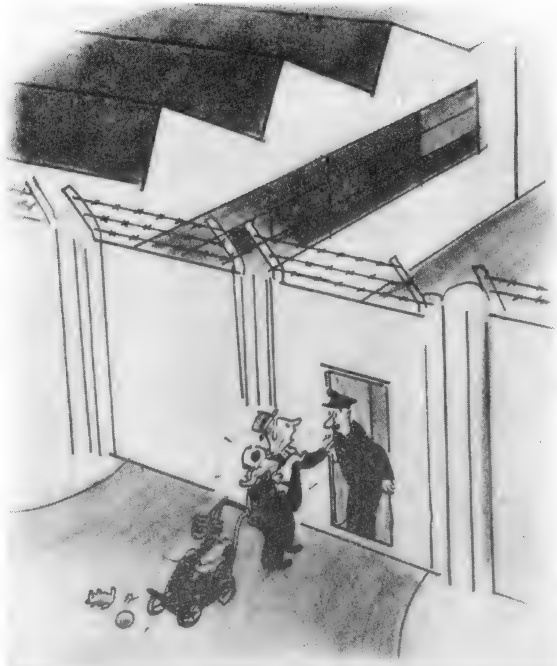
" But, if I shave it off, what about after the war? I'm 'Madame Beaver,' the Bearded Lady! "

" We're reporting for part-time."



" Well, you said ' Come prepared for sewing ! ' "

" I say, do you know whether Lady Penelope Rosewater leaves with this shift ? "



" Hi, be a pal, and ask Mrs. Smith in the Blasting Dept. how often Mr. Smith should give young Cyril his Gripe Water."

" Well, anyway, they won't take YOU *to work in a factory, they haven't got the transport ! "*

" You won't get time on munitions for sitting, dear, so you won't need this furniture."

"I wouldn't bother for myself, but the kids like a pudding at Christmas."

"I tell you—I'm thoroughly afraid to smack my children now, Nellie!"

" He's crazy about me, Agnes—I've had flowers every morning for weeks ! "

" Listen, big boy, I'm sick to death of hearing about the wonderful tanks your old mother makes ! "

" He's so sweet about my friends, too. He always asks ' How's Corporal Jumbo ? ' "

" Yes, it's fun being on leave ! "

" This is my niece's room. She's enjoying a spell of leave with me at the moment ! "

" Well, bye-bye Mummie—and don't forget my advice ! "

" Yes ! darling, I'm listening, but I MUST *pop out and look—I've got a cake in the oven ! "*

" I'm looking forward to my leave, Phoebe, when I can do my spring-cleaning."

" Have a heart—they only want to stir the pudding and wish ! "

" Any complaints ? "

" I'll wager, too, sir—I won't look like you when I'm your age."

" Goodness only knows when the battalion will move, they're both keen chess players ! "

" Is it a flag-day, sir, or is this one of the little flags you play with ? "

" The Monty."

" While I remember, Grenville, a gentleman is calling this evening to tell you what to do in the event of invasion ! "

" I must say, I hand it out to you, uncle. One never hears much about what you're doing."

" Why, of course, dearest, your Sugar Popsie Wopsie loves Honey Bunch. But you must forgive me now, I'm giving an intelligence test."

" Forgive me—but I felt I'd rather ask you outside. I want a lance corporal's chevron ! "

" I must say I'm disappointed with the sword. I only cut our wedding-cake—and look ! "

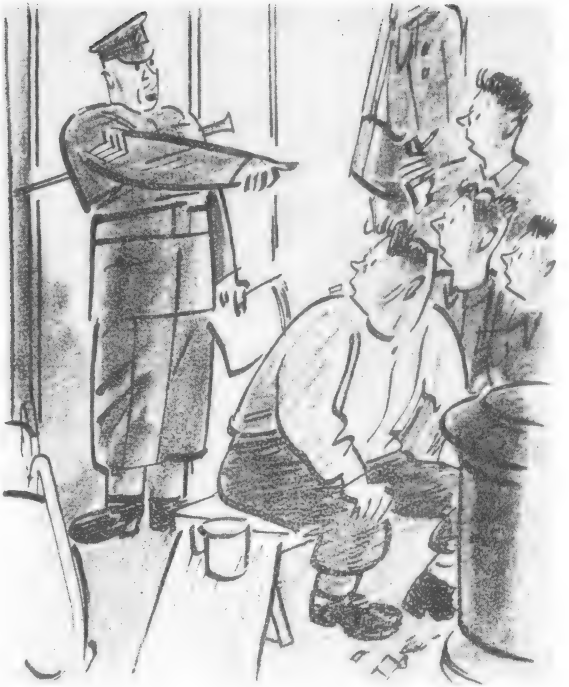
*" Yeah, I suppose my eyebrows **ARE** a bit high. but wait till* YOU*'ve been on surprise attacks for a couple of years ! "*

" Could I have the day off, sir, to go to my grandmother's investiture ? "

" The old school maybe, Lieutenant, but I'm still a rare one for a route march ! "

" Yeah ! That cake of yours ought to set a treat, if we don't get a frost ! "

" Oh yeah, someone trying to be funny ! Fall out the man who wished me a Happy New Year ! "



" You, you, you and you will parade as fairies in the regimental pantomime ! "

" I say, you're not really Peter's kid sister? I always regard you as such a baby!"

" I haven't seen a real sailor all day, so please may I touch your collar?"

" Some day my Prince will come ! "

" Yes, I thought the King was very nice . . . but not so nice as you, Jack ! "

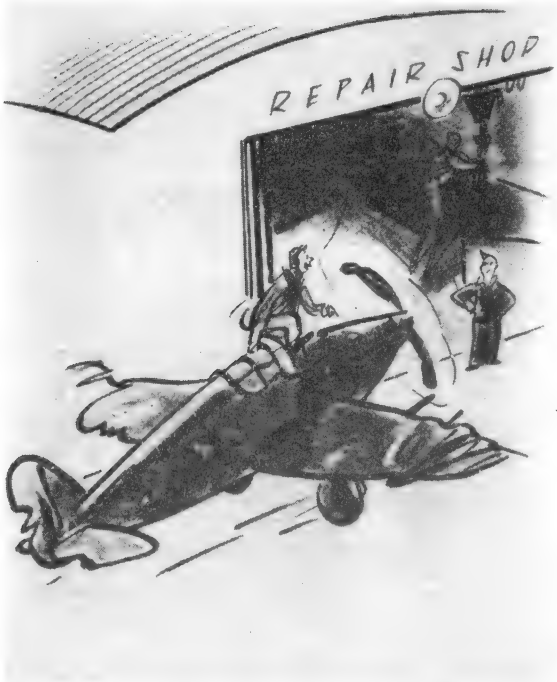
" And, darling, what did all the other boys say when you were made a lance corporal? "

" Dam the Commandos, Ivy! Can I help it, if they won't have me? "

" You darling boy, it's just what I wanted—a trouser-press ! "

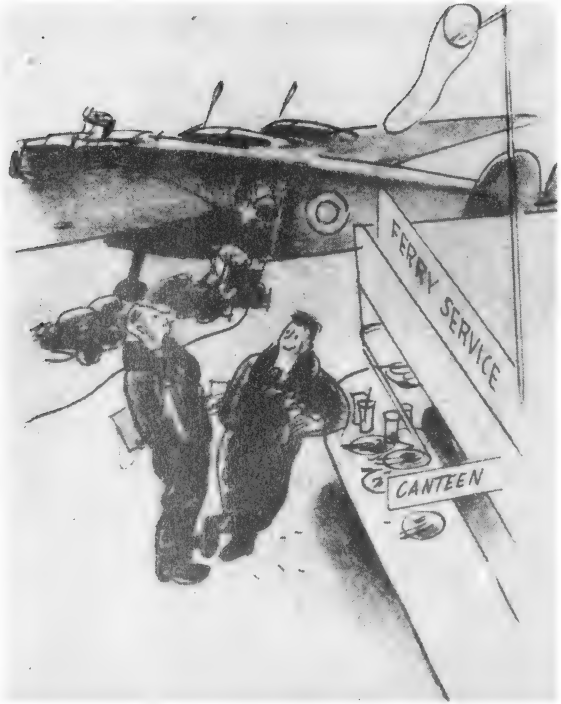
" I'm sorry, Miss. I didn't mean to pull you on to my knee—only I used to be a ventriloquist ! "

" What's wrong? Blimey! Listen to the carburettor! "



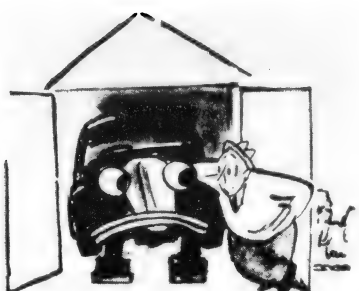
" I bet you they're going somewhere! "

" I don't care a tinker's cuss what you did as a small boy—that thing's quite unnecessary ! "

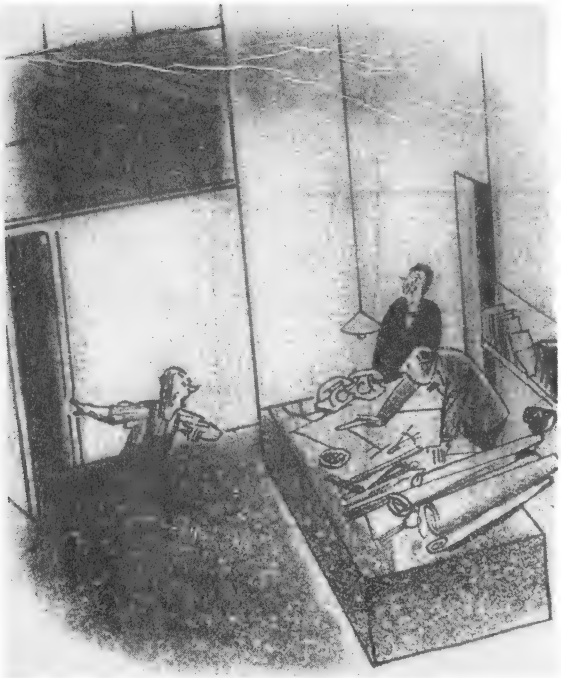


" Just one for the Atlantic, old man ? "

THE OLD 'JOKES' AT HOME

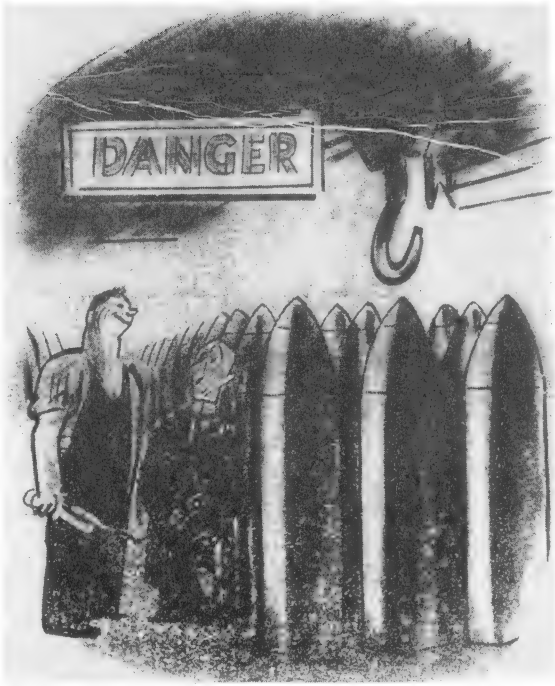


*" **Now that** you're back, sir, we'll nip out for a game of darts. Okay ? ! "*



" Hi ! the conveyor belt has reversed and we're getting ploughshares ! "

" So if you feel nervous, you just say ' San Fairy Ann ' ! I must remember that ! "



" You won't correct him, will you ? He's not used to being frustrated ! "

" No, ma'am, they're not all my children. I look after them while their 'pretend' mummie do 'pretend' part time."

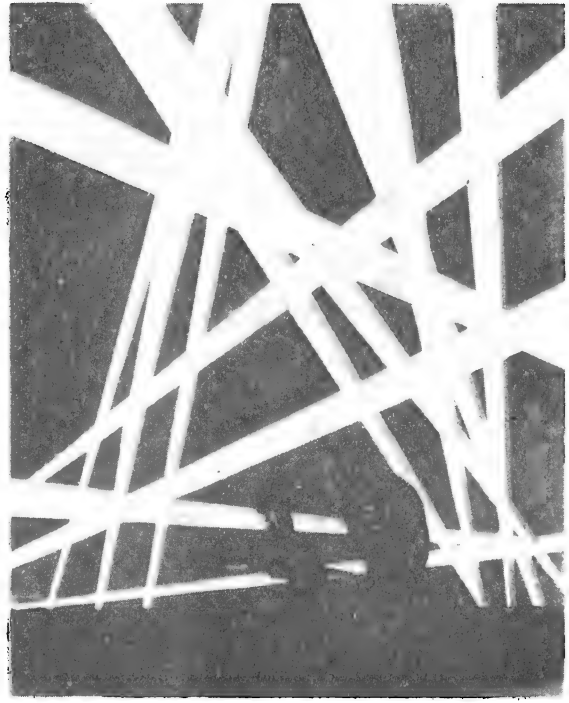
" Your supper's in the oven, George : wash up, and do the black-out ! "

" No, dear, it's nothing : he's only in bed with a temperature of 104. *So, if you please,* I'VE *got to do the shopping. You know what they're like ! "*

" I'm sorry, I can't help your arrangements for December 24–25. Fire-watching comes first ! "

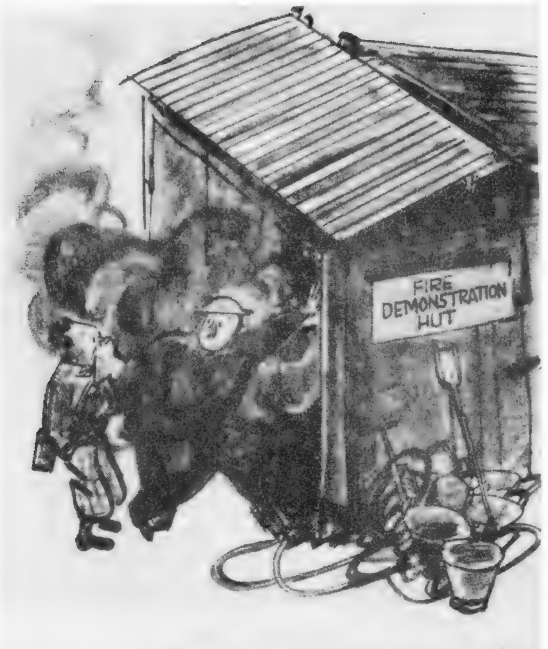
" Mondays and Thursdays—we play bridge ; Tuesdays—I'm out all day at my hairdresser ! Anyway, wouldn't it simplify things if you found out the exact date of the invasion ? "

" Blimey ! You're a fine one to advise four-inch walls. YOU *built the houses on this estate ! "*



" Hi ! Keep that torch down ! "

" I only do this part-time, sir. I run a fried fish shop ! "



" The escapist ! "

" *Water off !* "

" *You can't buy this stuff. I get it from a pal at sea !* "

SALVAGE SALLIES

"But when peace returns, ladies and gentlemen, I hope again to amuse and interest you with my 'paper-tearing,' thank you!"

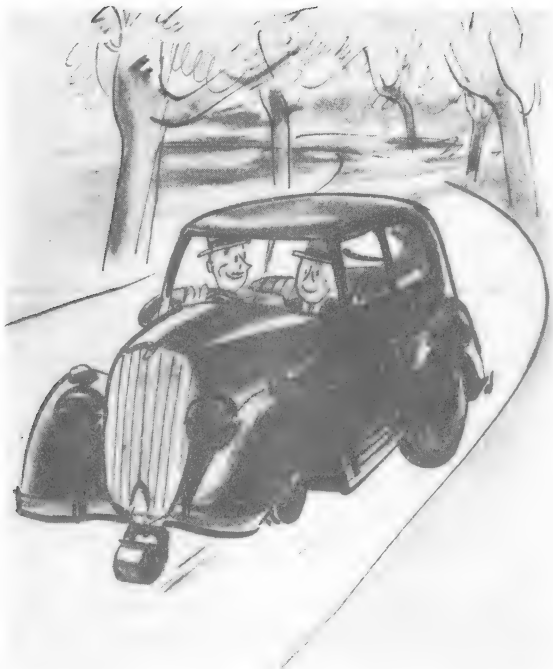
"ANY *author will do! I only want to chuck them on the salvage dump.*"

"*Blimey! What is it—Prize Day, dad?*"

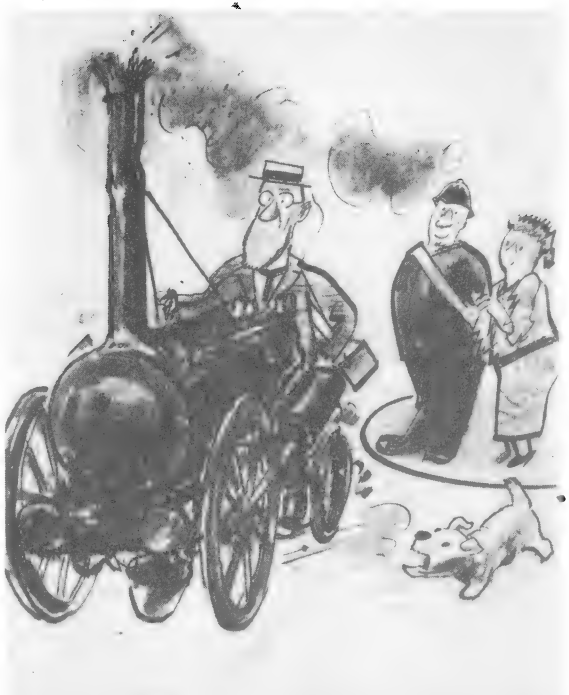
" We've called to collect the 'snow scene,' sir ! "

" Why not call your new novel 'Not for Salvage' ? It's your only chance of posterity, my boy ! "

" If all cars had a castor wheel in front—boy!
WOULD *we save tyres!"*



" Yes, lady, rumour has it the old gentleman works some place in South Kensington!"



" Blimey ! Hark how she rattles, and I thought this new petrol was going to take the ' knock ' out ! "

" Look, guv, I've collected a bit of salvage ! How about driving me to a dump ? "

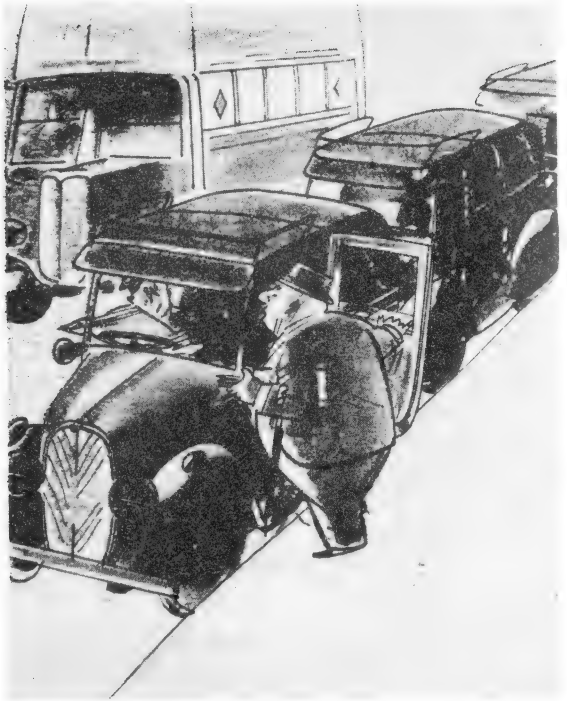
" Ha ! Ha ! You've got a puncture ! "

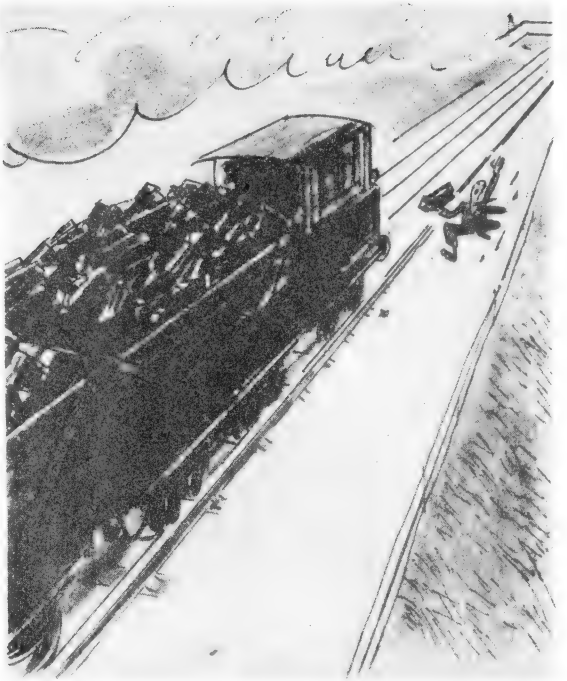
" And furthermore, sir, it felt to me as if some of your tyres are ' down to the canvas.' "

" Okay, Chief, this is fuel salvage! The bonfire's not till next week."

" Are you SURE *there's not a light burning at this moment in your house that is unnecessary? "*

" Exhibition of Fuel Economy, please ! "





" The Patriot ! "

G

NOT "MENTIONED IN DESPATCHES!"

"Friends, do you suffer from tired or aching feet . . . corns . . . bunions or calluses? . . . !"

" Nothing wrong, sir. Only, he don't feel 'too hot'."

" Believe it or not, Bill, some of them are still grousing because they are being asked to spend their 'holidays at home' again!"

" Blimey ! You're telling ME*—and I made the ruddy thing in Birmingham ! "*

" What a scream ! I bought THIS *one in the High Street ! "*

" I'll say ! "

" There's rain about somewhere, sir. My knees are quite puffy, again ! "

" Boat Race Result, sir ! "

" Sweep the garage while we're out, Jenkins ! "

" Guiseppe tella you everything—but not how he maka da water-ice. Dat iss secret ! "

" She says she wants to kiss you, sir—for clearing out the Germans ! "

"What! Me too young to pick apples? Don't make me laugh, lady!"

" I must say you all seem very keen—and appear to know a lot about it ! "

" Good pickers ! "

" I thought we were never going to get away from the ' Holidays at Home ' committee meeting ! "

" You old ' So-and-So ' ! You're on the ' Holidays at Home ' committee, too ! "

" Until such time as I can obtain a ruling on the private use of mine-detectors— bathing from this beach is definitely prohibited, sir."

" Don't forget, Bill, the coal merchant's wife wins the Beauty Competition. She's last but one."

" Yes, lady ! I thought it an idea to bring the seaside to the kiddies."

" Don't be such a cross-patch, Alfie. It's Basil's turn to see the sea ! "

" I'm sorry, sir. This is a ' restricted ' area ! "

" From the top here, old man, we look down upon one of those delightfully desolate coves so typical of the West Country."

" We found him as a stowaway, obviously trying to beat the ban ! "

" So this is where you are ? I've had your supper waiting for two solid hours ! "

" ' No-Boop-a-Doop ' Smith and his boys make a come-back."

" That's Eric going to his allotment, that's Eric in the fish queue, that's Eric in the fish queue again. That one's a bit distorted—it's Eric coming back from his allotment. And that's Eric sorting bones and paper by the salvage bins ! "

FISH, FLESH AND FOUL!

" I won't say definitely it will be a turkey, but anyhow I'll see you don't have to open a tin on Christmas Day."

" The man from Billingsgate ! "

" Believe it or not, Eileen, I think I've lost a couple of pounds since Lord Woolton went."

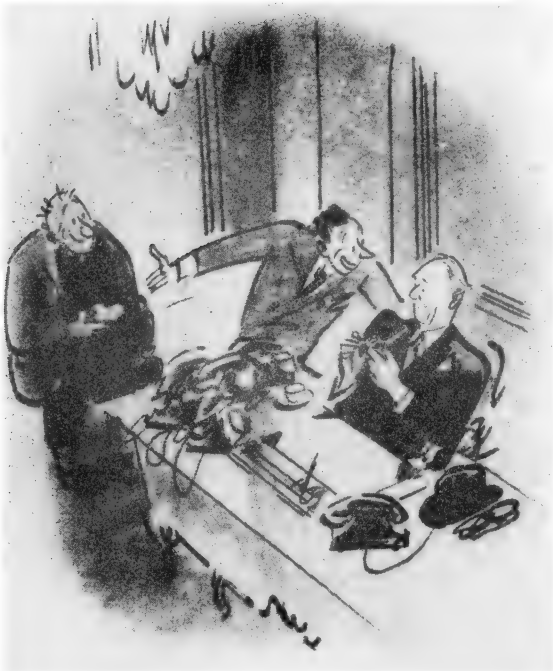
" Would you care for a tanner sweep ticket on a Christmas turkey, mister ? "

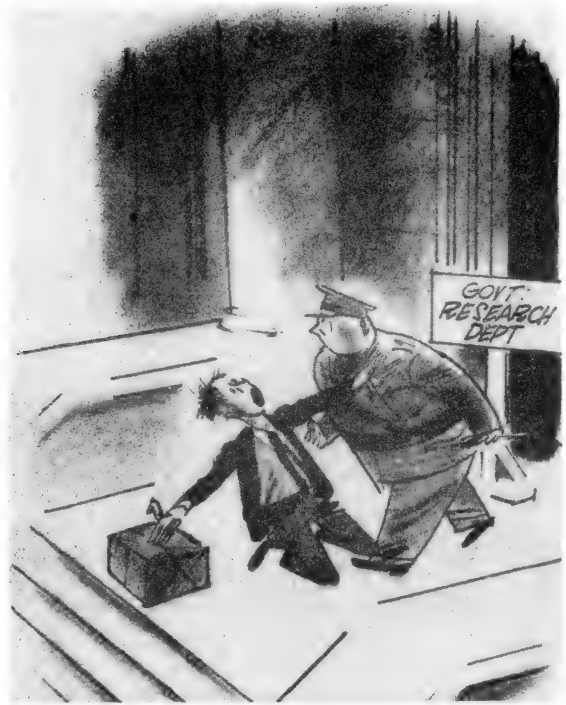
" Good boy, go find it ! "

" What ! are they sending you evacuees, now ? "

" Envy ! "

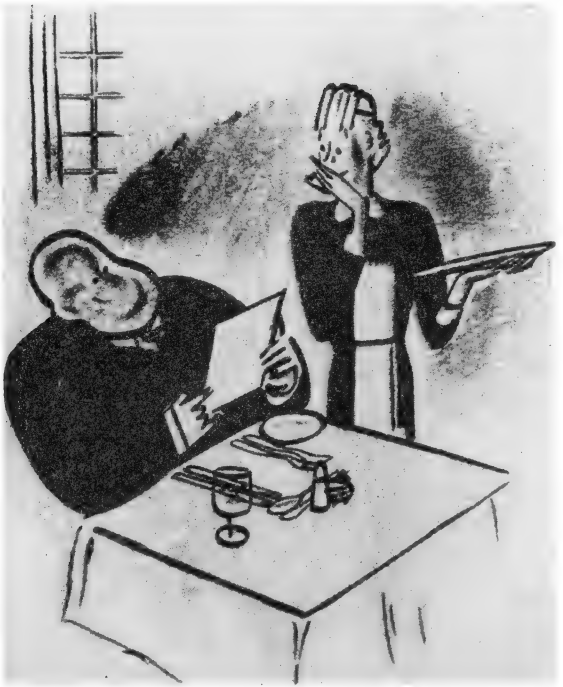
" But, Chief, the old boy certainly HAS *got something here—a peel-less potato ! "*





" Sir ! I appeal to you, for humanity's sake, to consider my invention—a perfect potato peeler ! "

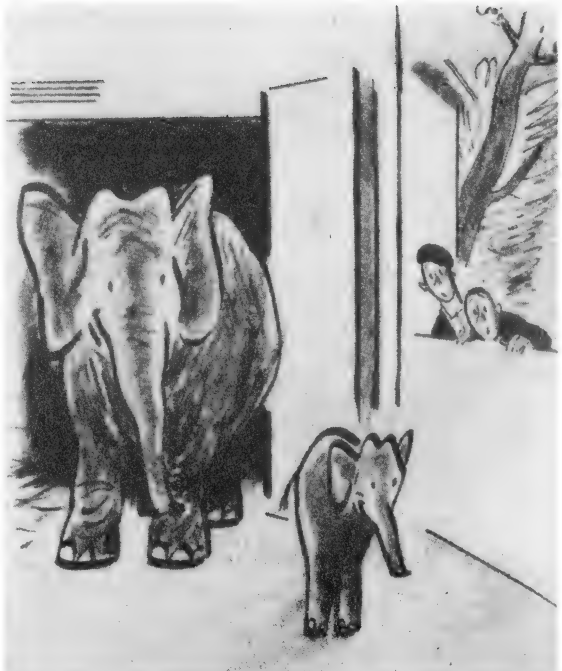
" Bless me, I shall LOOK *like a potato soon ! "*



" Willie, you must try and eat more potatoes, to save shipping space ! "

" Aw, quit growling! Thank your lucky stars we're not in Borneo now! "

" Half an elephant! Blimey, that's what comes of talking to her about shipping space! "



" Hi ! you've no right to serve this ' veal.' You're supposed to conserve rubber ! "

" I should say so—at ten quid a bottle ! "

ACES OF SPADES!

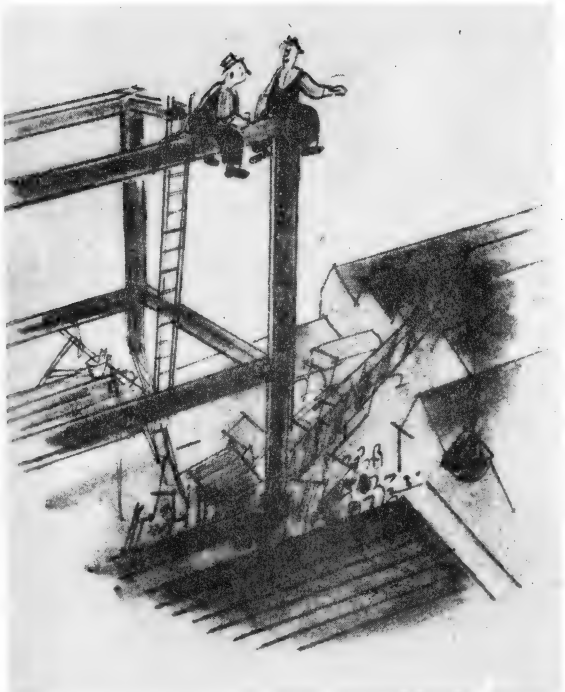
" My dear, anything under two thousand acres is chicken feed these days ! "

" Nonsense, Professor ! You can see my Titians and stamp collection any time. Come and see my broccoli and onions ! "

" So your advice, Mr. Compost, is—don't sow them too late or too early ? "

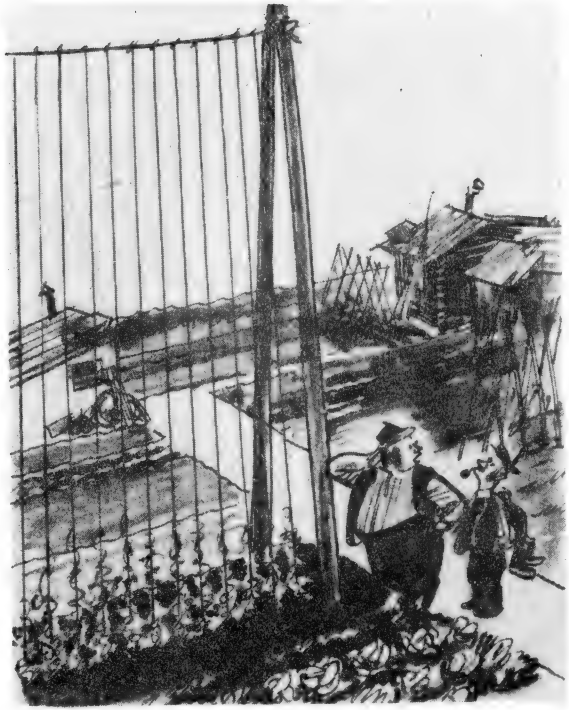
" It's a bean ! And the funny thing is—I said to the wife ' This packet reads like a fairy story ! ' "

" I've no idea WHAT *it is. All I know is, I usually knock my pipe out just here."*



" You'd hardly credit it, Bill, but my beans are this high ! "

" Maybe I am ! But it's better than being a blinkin' pessimist ! "

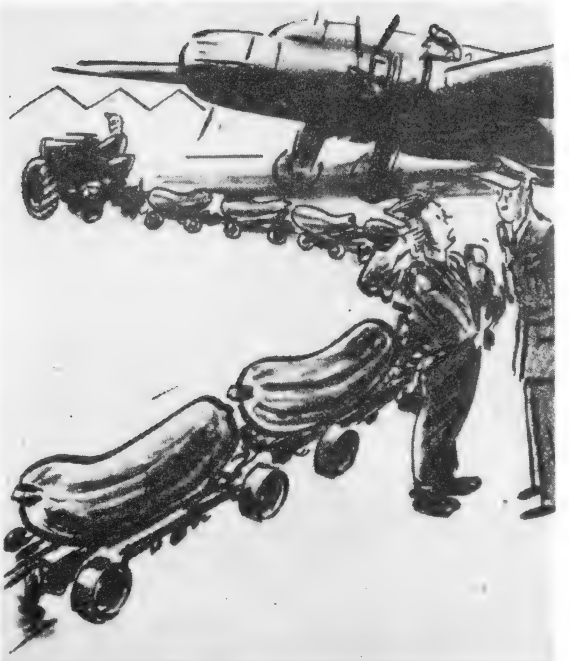


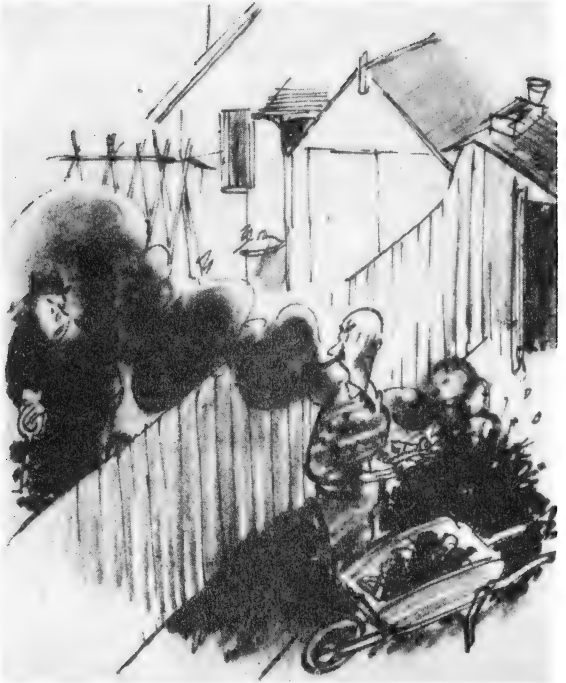
" I say, let's organise this job properly. I'll pick your dwarf beans, if you pick my runners ! "

" It's a problem ! Each year I have to take another allotment, because the extra exercise makes me eat twice as much as before."

" My Commando son thought he'd help me on the allotment—but it's been too much for him ! "

" Vegetable marrows, sir, off the station allotment. We're taking them to the cookhouse ! "

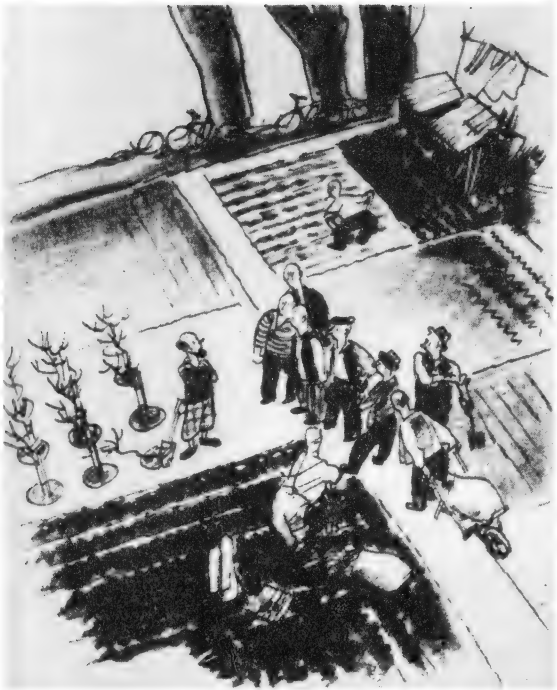




" Phew ! Why not try a pipe-cleaner, neighbour ?"

" At a conservative estimate, old man, I'd say the smoke from the big fire rises fifteen to twenty feet and from the small one two foot six ! "

" But I CAN'T *eat potatoes. I prefer rose hips ! "*



" Daddy's sweetheart pull out naughty 'ickle weeds, whilst Daddy goes sleepy-byes ! "

COUNTER MEASURES

" *Mrs. Smith ! ! !* "

" *Gangway please ! This lady* HAS *some coupons !*"

" *Okay !* Now, *where are your clothing coupons ?*"

" Well, good luck and God speed my boy! Remember, it's a number EIGHT *battery I want."*

" Blimey, number eight batteries! And—we ain't got a torch between us!"

" Yes, sir ! A glass counter. I thought it would remove a lot of ill feeling ! "

" You got TWO *razor blades ? Where ? "*

" The war MAY *have taken a turn for the better— but there's no need for you to say ' Thank you ' to a customer yet ! "*

" What ! Five pounds for a doll for the nipper ? Nark it, we're pickpockets ourselves."

" Dear Sirs, herewith our application for a permit to purchase utility furniture. . . ."

" No, it's not for bathing or cycling. We just want something to live in after we're married ! "

" Yes, lady ! Owing to the shortage of materials, my sister is the " guy " this year."

" Don't flatter him—he hasn't bought me any thing for years ! "

" Could you direct us to the 'Black Market'? "

" If you want to know—and you obviously do—it's a water butt! "

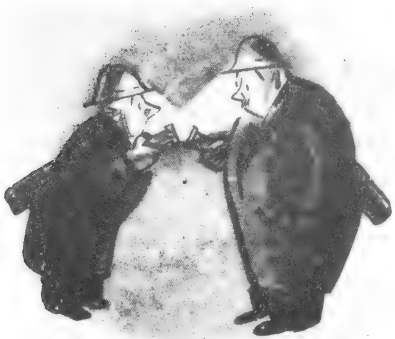
" And how's Mrs. Coalman, and those lovely little ones, and when are you coming to tea—you naughty boy ? "

" Don't forget to raise your hat, that's the coal merchant's wife ! "

" Imagine anyone you had the slightest feeling for, dear, spending their life getting coal ! "

" I've been and forgotten my glasses, lady. Is this the right address ? "

"FIGURES OF FUN!"



"Beveridge and Uthwatt, sir? I seem to have a dim recollection. What are they—comedians?"

" Any new Beveridge jokes in the City ? "

" Don't worry your pretty head, my dear ! Social security isn't new. WE*'ve had it for years ! "*

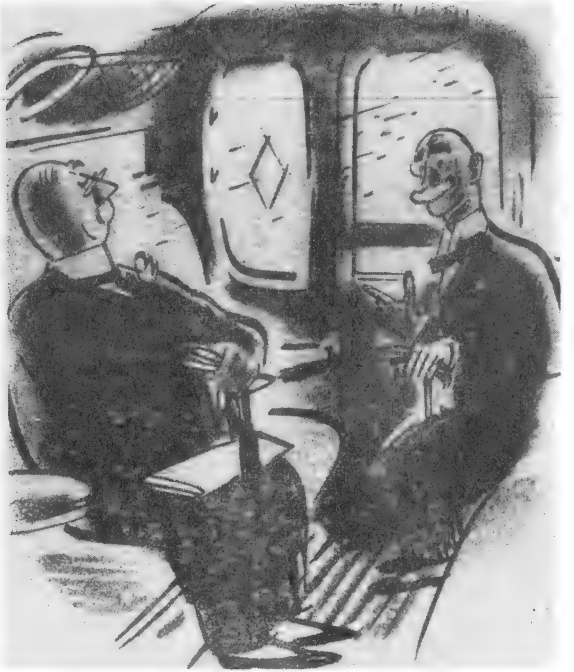
" This sounds like us—' Beautiful hotel in sub-tropical grounds, ideal for war-torn nerves.' "

" I agree absolutely, old man. I've no time at all for public house politics ! "

" After this war, Pop, it'll be as easy to go to Honolulu for the week-end as it was to Brighton ! "

" By Gad ! I notice if you see a RAT *now, you're supposed to report it ! "*

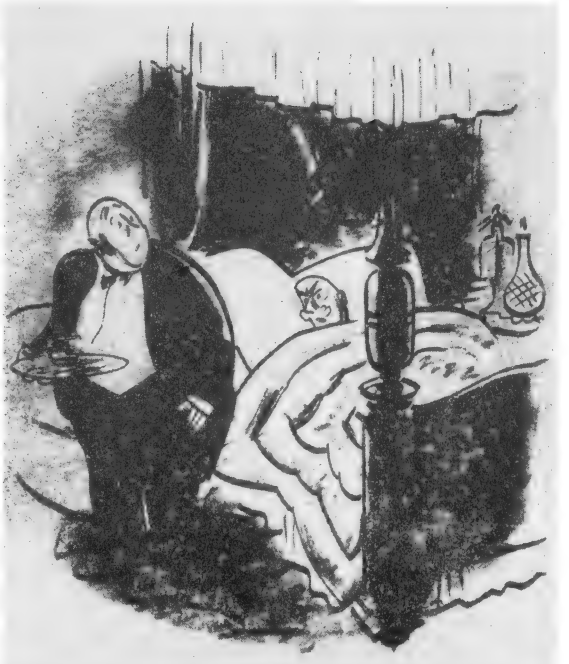
" What's happening today reminds me of a rather amusing cricket match. I well remember—— ! "



" Pardon me, sir—would you mind if I raised the window? I rather gather we're being machine gunned by hostile aircraft."

" Being a chilly morning, your Grace, I think the shirt with a tail is indicated ! "

" Remind me to write to the papers about the noise of our bombers going over."



" Station, please! And may I have a little 'go' at the wheel?"

" There's nothing wrong, Mr. Smith. All you've got to do is—pull yourself together. let yourself go, put your back into it and relax."

" I KNOW *I run about too much, doc ! But—it's my job. I have to keep the fire buckets filled in the de-hydration room."*

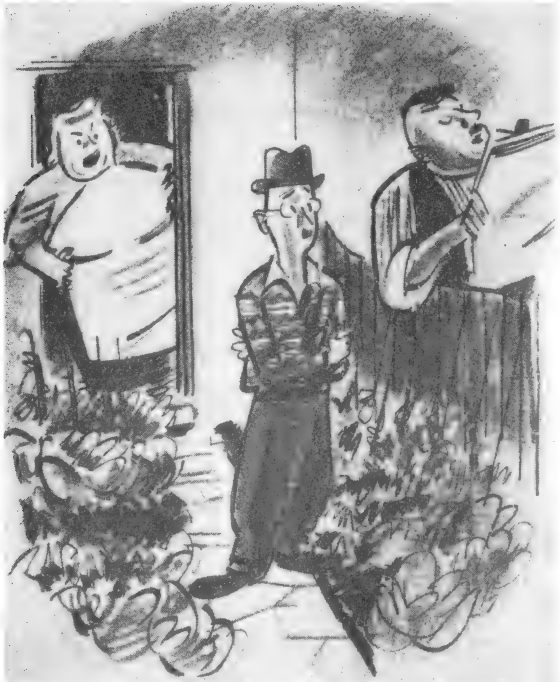
" It's popularly known as ' housemaid's knee,' madam ! Numbers of husbands suffer from it these days."

" Yes, I wish I'd married a Russian! He'd have mended the kitchen tap, and dug the garden, while YOU'RE *thinking about it! "*

" Willie, come in and change! You've got your best trousers on! "

" Look, Nell, couldn't we be co-belligerents ? "

" Don't be late, darling ! Remember you've got to 'dress up' tonight ! "



" Yes ! It looks as if certain people want to shut up the little man altogether ! "

" It's a bargain, Mr. Mutt ! I'll do YOUR *fire-watch next Whitsun, see ? "*

"They've been MARVELLOUS *birds, old man! My wife's had all the eggs she wanted, and I get all the pipe-cleaners I need."*

"Personally, I rest in the afternoons. I don't like looking a 'drudge' when the wife comes home from work!"

"TAKING THE MIKE!"

"What's so marvellous with the Brains Trust, Ethel, is that none of them have the slightest idea of what they're talking about!"

" The next question comes from a corporal in the Home Guard. He asks, rather laconically, ' In planning the brave new world—could not something be done about mothers-in-law ? ' "

" Instead of the Brains Trust programme advertised for this time, we have in the studio Mr. Bunsen. He will tell us about the domestic meter, and how to read it—Mr. Bunsen ! "

" Since this news began, it has been learned . . . ! "

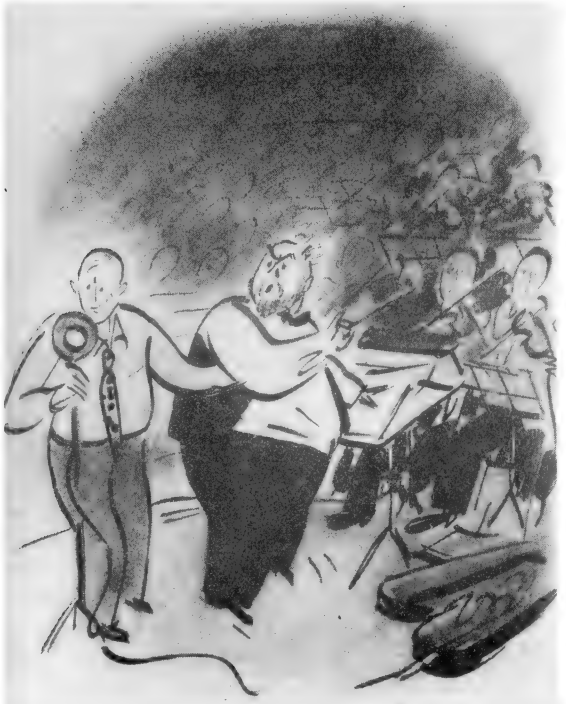
" I must say, Major, the B.B.C. has improved its news a lot just recently ! "

" Good morning ! This is the 7 o'clock news. The battle of flowers in Tunisia appears to have lost none of its intensity . . . ! "

" Now, here is ' the news.' "

" Remember me? I gave you the dope on Mussolini. NOW *listen to what I've got! "*

" Here we have someone who can tell us more about Hitler and his party than anyone living . . . ! "



" Here is Sir Henry and this is his Guest Night ! "

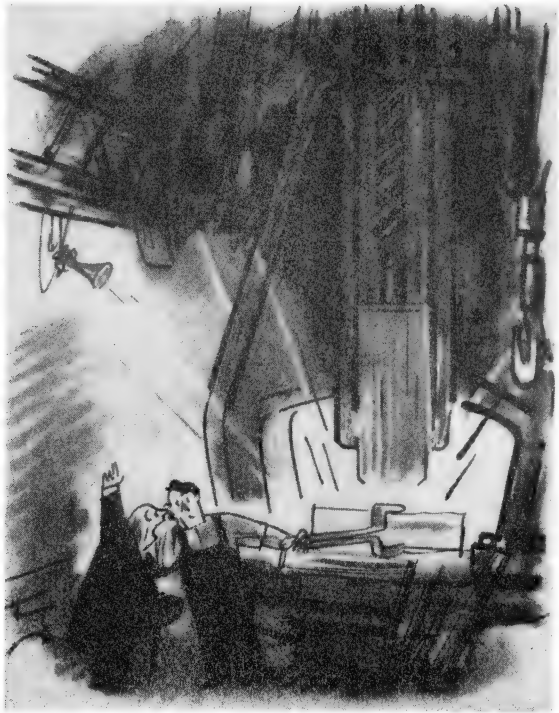
" Well, fellows, here she is to say 'good-bye' to you. Gosh, I wish you could SEE *her ! "*

" Sorry, Babs! The B.B.C. thinks you're too 'anæmic.' "

" By trouncing the Wild Cats in the biggest double header of the fall, it looks like the Bruins are sitting pretty in the attic! "

" Hello, Maria, you old scorpion, this is swell being able to tell you what I think about you, and no back answers."

" Hullo, Mum and Dad, this is Willie your evacuee son, get cracking, old timers, and mail me cigs, razor blades, and the works of Aristotle."



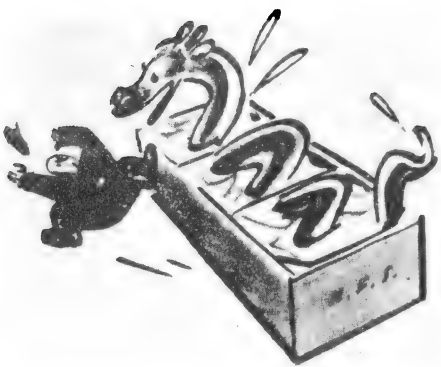
" Is ' Music While You Work ' distracting ? "

" I know, let's have a ' Yelling Bee ! "

" Dam it, sir, be original, I said, ' This is no time for complacency,' in MY *speech ! "*

" Why not send your ideas on saving fuel to Freddie Grisewood ? "

MIXED BAG!



" Seen anything of the old man recently ? "

" Okay, assuming you've got two thousand tanks there, and I'm laying doggo here, how are you going to surprise me ? "

" Hi, you're mopping up Kremenchug, Cecil's doing a pincer movement with me from Dnepropetrovsk and Melitopol towards the Perekop Isthmus ! "

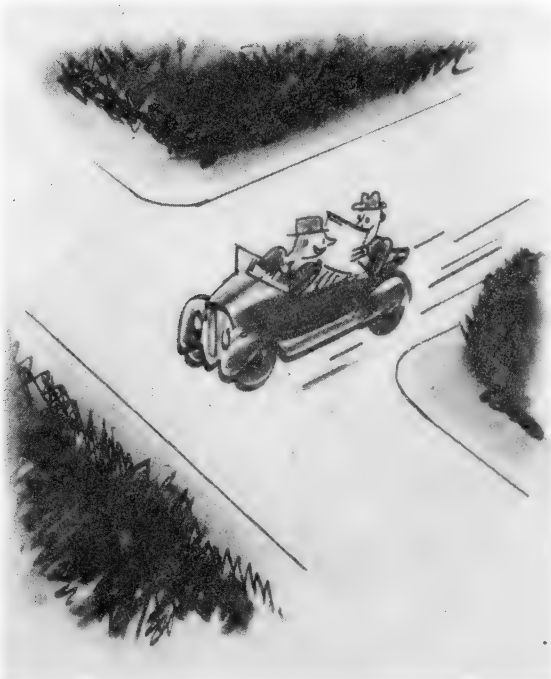
" Eleven christenings on Saturday, nine on Monday, seven Wednesday. We can't go on like this, sir, why not open a second font ? "

" Help for Russia ! You old silly, they don't use these now ! "

" No, he doesn't say where he is. He only says 'I could do with a pint.' That might be anywhere, mightn't it ! "

" It's from Tunisia. Bert wants me to send him some English flowers, to throw back at them."

" It's ' in the bag,' old man, we've definitely turned the corner ! "



" Well buddies, you've seen the Tower, St. Paul's, Nelson's Column, Buckingham Palace and the Houses of Parliament, now, here's the queue for ' Gone With The Wind ' ! "

" No, lady, they're cold potatoes, it's a new wheeze ! "

" It's the new ' Commando ' shade face powder, Moddom. Definitely elusive and captivating."

" I must say, these pillows they've dotted about the countryside are a blessing ! "

" The Treasurer of the 'Slate Club' (which numbers many Home Guards) takes a stroll."

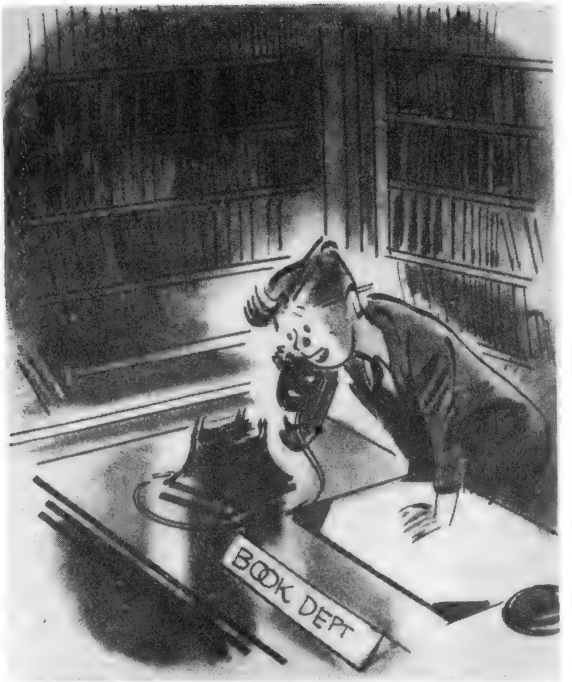
" In the absence of a bugle, sir, I take leave to inform you it's ' Cookhouse ' ! "

" You are my sunshine, my only sunshine . . . ! "

" I'm a greengrocer, see, Doc, and I think the smell of oranges has upset me ! "

" It must be habit with me, I'm a camouflage expert ! "

" Perhaps you would like another opinion, gentlemen ! "



" Are we out of ' Omar Khayyam ' ? Search me, lady, this is a lending library, not the Ministry of Information."

" Pardon me, may I share your taxi, young man ? "

" And darlingest, when I'm eighty, will you still call me ' positively wizard ' ? "

" It's all very well, George, I tell you all about the house, the children, the garden, but you never noticed my hat ! "

" You village people have got something to thank the war for, because in normal times we go abroad for our holidays."

" Look, sis, here's Grandpa's idea of giving me a ' Fort ' for a present."

" Sorry, Smithy, you're too old to lead the gang, you're nearly eleven ! "

" You're 'mustard,' lady. I hope you try Hitler and Mussolini one day."

" Fair's fair, Pop, you used to eat my sweets, when tobacco was scarce."

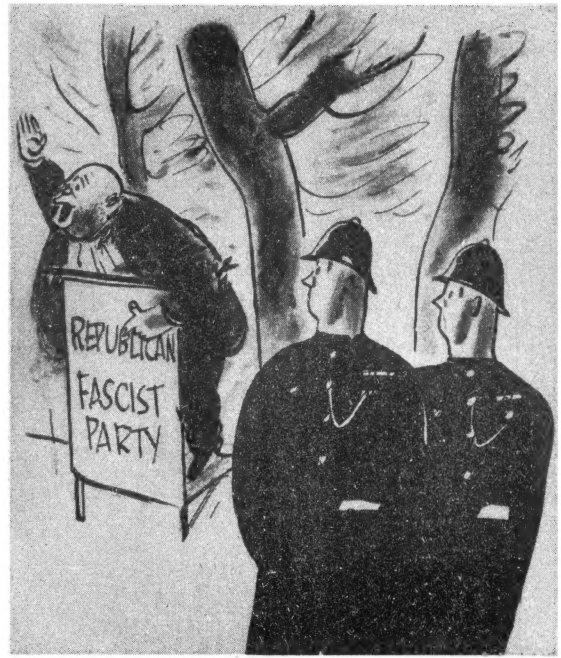
" Now, you disbelieving woman, did I bump my head against the shelter last night, or not ? "

" Be reasonable, luv, you just can't get an alarm clock these days ! "

" No, Moddom, tanks, planes or ships are not encouraged, our toys are designed to impart a sense of realism and urgency ! "

" Don't go down the mine, laddie ! "

" I reckon it'll end sudden, and I ain't just thought of that, I said it three years ago."



" He's a newcomer to the park, but his dial seems familiar."

— LAUGH AND LET LAUGH!
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